

Neglect

Definition

Investigations is the number of allegations of child neglect referred to, and investigated by, the Department for Community Based Services for the reported year. *Percent substantiated* is the percent of investigations for neglect where the Department for Community Based Services determined that neglect occurred.

Data in context

Children have basic physical needs like food and clothing, as well as emotional needs for love and attention, that must be met in order to grow and thrive. The absence of these basic necessities can negatively affect children's development and opportunities for the future. In some instances, factors like poverty, substance abuse, or mental illness impair parents' abilities to properly care for their children. Regardless of cause, neglect has serious consequences for children, families, and communities.

Neglect continues to be the most common type of child maltreatment, impacting 63 percent of child victims nationwide in FFY 2005.¹ Neglect was also the leading cause of child fatalities from maltreatment, contributing to 42 percent of deaths in that 12-month period.² National data indicate that among Asian, Black, and White children, about half of child victims experience neglect.³

Many attributes of neglect overlap with conditions of living in poverty, making it difficult to distinguish between a need to protect a child from perceived harm and a well-intentioned parent or caregiver who needs additional resources to adequately provide for children. Given the traumatic effects of removing a child from his or her home, communities can ensure children



have the best opportunities to remain safely in the home by supporting parents and other caregivers. Prevention activities can range from promoting positive parenting to offering family preservation services for those at greatest risk.⁴

Unlike statewide declines in investigations of physical and sexual abuse, investigations for child neglect increased by 11 percent (3,694 investigations) from 2003 to 2006. Increases in the number of neglect investigations were largest in the most populated counties of Fayette and Jefferson, while eleven counties had decreases in neglect investigations that were greater than 100 during that time.

More than one third of neglect investigations were substantiated statewide in 2006, though the rate varied from a low of 14 percent in Harrison County to more than 80 percent in Ballard, Hickman, McCreary, Robertson, and Trigg Counties. While the state rate of substantiated investigations of neglect only changed by one percentage point from 2003 to 2006, the rate declined by more than 20 percentage points in eight counties and increased by more than 30 percentage points in seven other counties.

Data Source: Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services, Department for Community Based Services. Number of children for rate calculation from Kentucky Population Research at the University of Louisville Urban Studies Institute.

Rate Calculation: (number of investigations with neglect substantiated in 2003 * 100) / (number of investigations of neglect in 2003)

(number of investigations with neglect substantiated in 2006 * 100) / (number of investigations of neglect in 2006)

1 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Children, Youth and Families (2007). *Child Maltreatment 2005*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

4 Child Welfare Information Gateway (2007). *Framework for Prevention of Child Maltreatment*. Available at <http://www.childwelfare.gov>. Accessed September 2007.

Investigations of child neglect (number & percent substantiated)

	2003		2006	
	Number of investigations	Percent substantiated	Number of investigations	Percent substantiated
Kentucky	31,048	38	34,742	39
Adair	162	36	101	33
Allen	125	47	208	40
Anderson	102	60	88	27
Ballard	6	33	4	100
Barren	290	55	464	41
Bath	158	33	155	43
Bell	286	40	478	36
Boone	207	37	209	32
Bourbon	153	23	133	34
Boyd	343	27	505	22
Boyle	181	35	156	41
Bracken	40	28	36	50
Breathitt	298	27	383	35
Breckinridge	95	57	77	47
Bullitt	236	54	114	44
Butler	29	48	118	44
Caldwell	47	64	58	55
Calloway	127	39	97	48
Campbell	509	21	247	56
Carlisle	64	30	66	41
Carroll	141	36	53	42
Carter	422	26	578	28
Casey	99	32	87	41
Christian	433	31	497	31
Clark	150	49	128	75
Clay	83	59	137	53
Clinton	83	23	85	29
Crittenden	64	38	70	30
Cumberland	10	60	25	56
Daviess	979	42	1,282	40
Edmonson	117	41	140	40
Elliott	81	59	153	37
Estill	218	33	89	30
Fayette	1,688	34	3,140	36
Fleming	131	44	97	52
Floyd	785	25	870	25
Franklin	360	47	623	34
Fulton	90	38	80	31
Gallatin	43	14	32	38
Garrard	62	34	23	70

	2003		2006	
	Number of investigations	Percent substantiated	Number of investigations	Percent substantiated
Grant	213	38	104	29
Graves	253	47	152	51
Grayson	122	30	107	44
Green	80	48	37	51
Greenup	345	26	327	25
Hancock	62	56	84	30
Hardin	861	33	733	41
Harlan	285	31	453	34
Harrison	119	19	108	14
Hart	126	32	182	36
Henderson	447	44	450	45
Henry	31	42	106	52
Hickman	13	38	14	86
Hopkins	275	44	349	30
Jackson	101	45	99	51
Jefferson	4,294	47	4,957	54
Jessamine	438	33	278	33
Johnson	728	30	647	33
Kenton	740	40	855	42
Knott	306	42	323	44
Knox	197	33	183	40
LaRue	33	30	102	58
Laurel	553	38	676	30
Lawrence	174	33	251	37
Lee	122	49	149	26
Leslie	189	32	209	28
Letcher	564	35	568	37
Lewis	77	47	87	46
Lincoln	223	28	227	26
Livingston	49	35	39	62
Logan	53	64	101	48
Lyon	28	57	26	31
McCracken	416	43	302	62
McCreary	229	48	190	81
McLean	91	49	150	56
Madison	482	28	262	41
Magoffin	322	34	303	22
Marion	132	41	112	44
Marshall	83	48	91	42
Martin	432	31	523	40
Mason	44	48	134	26

	2003		2006	
	Number of investigations	Percent substantiated	Number of investigations	Percent substantiated
Meade	54	56	124	34
Menifee	58	22	56	29
Mercer	225	34	88	55
Metcalfe	117	57	95	51
Monroe	85	32	152	38
Montgomery	136	50	119	60
Morgan	116	31	126	33
Muhlenberg	166	56	127	47
Nelson	198	31	163	48
Nicholas	7	86	20	25
Ohio	199	50	168	62
Oldham	53	40	193	25
Owen	60	40	71	28
Owsley	46	37	90	46
Pendleton	97	31	144	33
Perry	560	45	551	29
Pike	932	30	1,366	26
Powell	153	21	102	39
Pulaski	658	28	953	22
Robertson	17	41	2	100
Rockcastle	137	58	150	39
Rowan	266	39	173	45
Russell	119	25	97	24
Scott	202	27	85	35
Shelby	243	34	176	40
Simpson	86	34	112	42
Spencer	26	46	58	53
Taylor	214	33	165	49
Todd	50	68	57	56
Trigg	29	38	36	92
Trimble	48	38	16	56
Union	125	42	123	39
Warren	787	40	759	36
Washington	52	33	108	50
Wayne	124	44	80	69
Webster	75	35	83	57
Whitley	432	43	576	38
Wolfe	124	35	97	36
Woodford	143	43	145	35